1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

the village that a ward within the village occupied with relation to the *kianza* and was the property of the lineage occupying that ward. Actually, the outlines of these lineage holdings were irregular. Their limits were set by natural boundaries and there was an attempt to equalize their value. 621 423 596

At the time of making the *tavy*, the lineage land was temporarily divided among the various families, but it reverted to the lineage as soon as the crop was harvested. Lineage land, or, more correctly, the right to use it for agricultural purposes, was sometimes sold to members of other lineages within the village. This was a last resort and was only considered justifiable when some member of the lineage had been enslaved and his ransom could not be raised otherwise. It seems that such sales were often considered rather as pledges for loans, for every lineage tried to keep its land intact and would go to great lengths to buy back any which had been sold. When a lineage seceded from a village, it forfeited its land rights and its former territory could be occupied by the other lineages without recompense to it. 621 596 425

Among the Menabe two new developments in land ownership have occurred in recent times. Due to the increasing value of forest products, the lineages now preempt for their members the right to gather honey, wax and raffia within their territories. There is also an increasing tendency toward individual ownership of land. This is correlated with the introduction of irrigated rice culture. The preparation of rice beds requires much labor and they must be kept in repair constantly. A family which builds a terrace system is felt to have established its individual right to the land and retains it as long as the terraces remain in use. If the land is allowed to lie fallow for any length of time, however, it reverts to the lineage. This development is so recent that, as yet, there seems to be no rule regarding the sale of rice beds to members of other lineages. 423 178 596 [243]

Among the Ikongo the rules regarding land ownership seem to be much the same as among the Menabe except that individual ownership of rice fields is much older and better established. Such fields are inherited within the family and the lineage has little or no right over them. [184]

All property other than land is individually owned. This extends even to the least important tools and utensils. Everything in the establishment, from the house down, belongs to some particular member of the family. These rights of ownership are recognized even between parent and child in spite of the great theoretical power 421 593

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421 of the father. A clear distinction is maintained between the property
593 of husband and wife. A woman owns all the baskets, mats, etc., which she has made and everything which she has received through gift or inheritance. Similarly, the wife has no claim on anything belonging to the husband at the time of their marriage, or on anything which he may make or inherit later.

The economic independence of wives is well illustrated by the provisions which exist among the Menabe for the division of any increase in the family wealth after marriage. The rules vary slightly with the gens, but in general the wife is entitled to one half of the increase, other than inheritances. This becomes her absolute property and is retained even when she is divorced with cause. She can demand a division at any time and it is not uncommon for wives who do not get on well with their husbands to take their share of the profits as they come in and bank them with their own relatives. This holds for an only wife, or a first one. The rights of subsidiary wives are less clearly defined, but the husband is expected to make gifts to them from time to time. These become their absolute property. Among the Ikongo there is no such regular division of profits, but a husband is expected to make his wives frequent gifts. In both groups it is considered bad form for a husband to make gifts to his subsidiary wives without the first wife's permission.

428 Inheritance is fixed by law and it is impossible for a person to make a will. At the same time, a man or woman can give property away even when on the deathbed and the legal heirs have no redress. The only limitation is that land cannot be given outside the family. Old people frequently use this right as a threat to obtain obedience from their children and it is not uncommon for a man to give most of his estate to some favorite son or daughter before his death. As a rule, he will not do this until he thinks his end is imminent, for a gift once made cannot be recalled. In all matters pertaining to
[597] inheritance, individuals who have been adopted have the same rights as those born into a similar relationship.

It is universally prohibited for a husband to inherit from his wife or a parent from a child, but in other respects the rules of inheritance differ somewhat in the northern and southern divisions of the tribe.

Among the Ikongo a wife cannot inherit from her husband. Apparently this works little hardship except in the case of barren women. The wife usually has her own property and seems to possess an informal life interest in her children's share of the husband's estate.